" (b) The Government of the Travancore-Cochin State are collecting water-cess from the ryots in Malabar at the rate of Rs. 5 per acre according to the terms of the agreement.

" (c) Yes. A permanent solution to the problem is under consideration of a joint committee of the Public Works Department and the Revenue officials of the Madras and the Travancore-Cochin States."

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE :—" It is regrettable that the copy of agreement placed on the table of the House is not to be seen here."

MR. SPEAKER :—" It must be there."

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE :—" No, Sir. My hon. Friend Sri Gopala Menon also joined me in searching for it."

SRI N. GOPALA MENON :—" It is not on the table."

SRI K. KUNHI MOHAMED SHAFEE :—" In view of the fact that the cultivators are experiencing great hardship, will the Government take necessary steps to expedite a permanent solution to the problem?"

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" It may be in-between the papers laid on the table of the House and I request the hon. Member to carefully look for it."

9 a.m. SRI M. NARAYANA KURUP :—" May I know how long since such complaints have been received by this Government and if so, what steps were so far taken by this Government to remedy them?"

THE HON. SRI M. A. MANICKAVELU :—" I have been receiving complaints for some time. We are now proposing to solve the problem once for all."

Tax revision in Mangalore Municipality.

* 1976 *Q.*—SRI K. ISHWARA : Will the Hon. the Minister for Local Administration be pleased to state—

(a) whether it is a fact that the Government appointed an officer to enquire into the revision petitions from the tax-payers of Mangalore Municipality;

(b) what steps the Government have taken on the report of the officer to redress the grievances of the rate-payers; and

(c) whether any and if so, what allegation has been made against the Revision Officer by the tax-payers; and, if so, what action the Government have taken in the matter?

THE HON. SRI S. S. RAMASAMY PADAYACHI :—" (a) Yes, Sir. The attention of the member is in this connexion invited to the answer given to his previous question No. 3000 on this subject.

" (b) No report has been received by the Government from the officer appointed for the disposal of revision petitions.

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" (c) No allegation against the Revision Officer by the tax-payers has been received by Government so far."

Police officers sent to Pondicherry.

* 1977 *Q.*—SRI S. RAMALINGAM (on behalf of Sri M. Kalyanasundaram): Will the Hon. the Minister for Finance be pleased to state—

(a) how many officers of the Police department have been sent to Pondicherry Territory; and

(b) at whose request they were sent?

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" (a) Sixteen.

" (b) At the request of the Government of India."

SRI V. R. NAGARAJAN :—" May I know, Sir, whether it is a fact that the Police Officers who were deputed to Pondicherry are going to be withdrawn at the end of the year? If so, I would request the Government to retain those officers there itself in view of their yeoman services rendered for the maintenance of law and order during their stay in Pondicherry."

THE HON. SRI C. SUBRAMANIAM :—" Provisionally these Police Officers have been lent. What is to happen to them later on is under the consideration of the Central Government and they will take decision."

Pepper cultivation.

* 1978 *Q.*—SRI K. ARANGANATHAN : Will the Hon. the Minister for Agriculture be pleased to state the steps taken in regard to pepper cultivation with special reference to the following points :—

(i) to increase the quantity of pepper produced ;

(ii) to improve the quality of pepper ;

(iii) to increase the extent of lands under pepper cultivation ; and

(iv) to see that the cultivator gets maximum price?

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" (i) to (iv) A statement* is placed on the table of the House.

SRI K. ARANGANATHAN :—" The agriculturists are put to a great loss in view of the fluctuations in the price obtained for pepper. In view of this fact, may I know whether the Government will examine this question and take necessary steps to see that the price of pepper is maintained at a particular level? "

THE HON. SRI M. BHAKTAVATSALAM :—" One of the measures undertaken by the Government is, Sir, to have the export duty reduced on black pepper from 30 per cent *ad valorem* or Rs. 65 per swt., whichever is lower to 15 per cent *ad valorem*. This measure will lead to greater export of pepper and that will lead to the improvement of prices obtained for pepper."

* Printed as Appendix II on pages 667–668 infra.